EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE TO SISTER JANE FRANCES BRADY, SC

HON. WILLIAM J. MARTINI

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 7, 1995

Mr. MARTINI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to take this opportunity to recognize an outstanding individual who has dedicated her life to serving others. Sister Jane Frances Brady, SC, brings comfort to those she touches through Healing the Children, a remarkable, service-oriented organization committed to the donation of medical resources to those who cannot afford the attention they need.

All over the world millions of families use the little money they have to buy just enough food to survive; they cannot afford normal medical expenses. In the most underdeveloped countries, children who need care go untreated because of a lack of resources or funding to afford the little care that is available. Families suffer unthinkable pain, and children are the victims in this tragedy.

Sister Jane Frances Brady, SC, the president and chief executive officer of St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center is a recipient of numerous awards from professional and civic organizations for her dedication to helping the needy. However, her commitment to Healing the Children proves what the giving of ones self really accomplishes. Healing the Children has sent her to foreign countries where she has served on medical teams helping children who are suffering as a result of a lack of medical resources. As a part of Healing the Children, Sister Jane has also opened the doors of St. Joseph's to sick and needy children from around the world.

Through the work of Sister Jane Frances Brady, SC, and the organization, Healing the Children, families are given the attention they need to help them stay in good health. This group of caring medical professionals seeks out children in need, recruits the medical personnel and provides loving support. The Healing the Children medical teams share their knowledge with the host country's medical personnel, in hopes that one day these trips will not be necessary. At both home and abroad, Healing the Children also flies children to hospitals where they will receive the best possible treatment for their ailment.

Through the caring leadership of executive director and founder Evelyn Dudziec, this organization has performed these important missions for more than a decade. Mrs. Dudziec works out of a small office in her home in Kinnelon, NJ where she oversees the management of Healing the Children. She is also a member of Concerned Persons for Adoption and the Spina Bifida Parent Support Group. As a volunteer chairperson of the Fresh Air fund of northern New Jersey, a member of the Vietnamese Refugee Program and a host to 48 children through Healing the Children since 1981, Evelyn opens her heart to those less fortunate. Together with Sister Jane Frances Brady, SC, they serve as a rare and special reminder of what one person can accomplish in this small world.

MARYVILLE ACADEMY—AN OASIS OF HOPE FOR ORPHANS

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 7, 1995

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, policy makers have been discussing the merits of orphanages within the concept of foster care and the need to restore the family in our society.

R. Bruce Dold, the Pulitzer Prize winning deputy editorial page editor for the Chicago Tribune, has written an excellent article for Notre Dame magazine, Summer 1995 edition on Maryville, a ''home of last resort.'' I am extremely proud of Maryville, which is located in my district, and of Father John Smyth, the academy's director.

Mr. Dold's article deserves a wide audience and I am pleased to commend it to my colleagues:

[From the Notre Dame Magazine, Summer 1995]

A PLACE TO CALL MY OWN

(By R. Bruce Dold)

He was a real wisenheimer, as they called it in those days, a cigar-smoking, card-playing, suspenders-and-fedora kid, and if he didn't straighten out quick, why, ''he'd turn out to be a 5-and-10 mug.'' That's what his older brother said. That's the reason Whitey Marsh had to go to the orphanage.

Oh, it wasn't easy at first. The kid ran away, but the sound of the lunch bell brought him back on the double. And when his brother robbed the bank and Whitey wouldn't spill the beans, it looked dark.

But Whitey was a good egg after all, and when he explained everything, how he was just trying to help his own flesh and blood, they let him go. And he was elected the mayor of Boys Town.

His father took off when he heard Tony Kohl was born. His mother was a drunk who beat him and burned him, and when he was 5 and his brother was 2, she dumped them both outside a child welfare office in Chicago.

They were adopted, but the new parents grew fearful of Tony as he got older. They said he was violent and emotionally unstable, that he hit his brother and other kids. When he was 10, they dropped him at an orphanage and tried to make sure he'd never see his brother again.

The child welfare officials wouldn't let him stay at the orphanage. They put him in a foster home. But he lured some of the younger kids into sex games, and the foster parents got rid of him. The officials put him in a psychiatric hospital, and after four months they placed him in another foster home. He set that one on fire, earning himself another trip to a hospital.

He went through a dozen foster homes, each time getting in trouble and getting kicked out. So they shipped him to a place in Arizona he describes as ''a prison,'' and he hated it.

Finally, a year ago, he was sent to Maryville Academy, the 112-year-old children's home in Des Plaines, Illinois, run by Father John Smyth '57. After a failed adoption and a dozen foster homes and two psychiatric hospitals and one ''prison,'' he's finally, at age 16, found a place that won't kick him out or lock him up. He's not the mayor of Maryville, but he's doing okay.

When House Speaker Newt Gingrich raised the prospect of removing unwed teenage mothers from welfare and allowing states to use the saved money to open orphanages, he stepped into a quietly raging war among those who make it their business to look after abused and neglected children.

When First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton slammed the Gingrich proposal as ''unbelievable and absurd,'' it appeared to be one more clash of partisan politics. Actually, the public was getting its first glimpse of that war among child-care experts.

Gingrich's suggestion that the naysayers watch the 1938 movie Boys Town to get an idea of what he had in mind was cockeyed. Whitey Marsh, the mug-to-mayor character played by Mickey Rooney, is as much like Tony Kohl as The Great Train Robbery is like Star Wars. But in a sense he probably didn't grasp, Gingrich was on to something.

The United States is currently the de facto parent for nearly half a million abused and neglected children, and the number is growing at a dizzying rate. The nation doesn't know what to do with all these kids, or with scores more who are on the way.

The revival of the orphanage is an unhappy, but utterly unavoidable, choice. The experts just aren't willing to admit it.

They held a roast last year for John Smyth, but nobody could think of anything particularly snide to say about him. The best line came from Chicago Police Superintendent Matt Rodriguez, who claimed that the good father held the Notre Dame record for most fouls in a varisty basketball game.

In a town that routinely chews up and spits out public figures, Smyth, 62, is regarded as an uncommon savior.

He was a 6-foot, 5-inch center and team captain at Notre Dame when the 1956–57 basketball team placed third in the Mideast Regional of the NCAA tournament. He was picked in the first round of the National Basketball Association draft by the Saint Louis Hawks, but after barnstorming for 30 games with a group of college stars picked to play against the Harlem Globetrotters, he gave up basketball to enter Saint Mary of the Lake Seminary in Chicago and, in 1962, the priesthood.

He knew nothing at all about Maryville when he was assigned there, fresh out of the seminary, but he though he could hack it for a few years. The place hadn't changed much since 1983, when it opened as Saint Mary's Training School, an outgrowth of a Chicago orphanage started a dozen years earlier to care for children orphaned by the Great Chicago Fire.

In the 1920s, Maryville housed as many as 1,200 children during a flu epidemic, and that many again during the Great Depression of the 1930s. But its fate was tied to changes in the nation's child-welfare policies, and in the early 1970s it nearly closed.

Today there are 276 kids on the campus, a third of them girls. None of the 276 is a Whitey Marsh.

There was a time, more than a century ago, when the orphanage seemed on the cutting edge of child protection. Children who were orphaned in the mid-19th century, usually by health epidemics, either lived on the streets or were placed with adults in poorhouses or jails. Some were shipped west to live with farm families, who often treated them more as indentured servants than as children.

By comparison, the orphanage was a refuge.

But orphanages fell into disfavor in the 1950s and '60s, when studies suggested that very young children who grew up in them suffered from developmental delays and failed to establish personal relationships.

With the advent of antibiotics and the welfare system, far fewer children were orphaned by disease or economic depression. If children had to leave their homes, it was more likely because they had been abused or neglected. The nation moved toward placing those children with foster families, volunteers who provided a temporary, substitute family.

In 1980, Congress passed the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act, which established that the nation's goal was to prevent the removal of abused and neglected children from their homes and, if they were removed, to reunify them with their families as quickly as possible.

The way station of choice for kids who had to leave their homes was now the foster family. The orphanage, officially, was on the outs.

What few people anticipated in 1980 was a new epidemic, one that can't be wiped out by antibiotics: an epidemic of child abuse. In 1982 there were 262,000 children living in substitute care; that number now has soared to 450,000, a high percentage of them the victims of sexual or physical abuse or neglect.

Smyth estimates that 85 to 90 percent of his youngsters come from homes where parents are afflicted by cocaine or alcohol abuse. A decade ago, 85 percent of the children at Maryville could be expected eventually to return to their parents. Now, just 15 percent have an realistic hope of ever going home. Heck, only 15 percent have any hope of a parent so much as showing up at Maryville for a visit.

When kids come to Maryville, they are angry and lost. ''We assume that they have not been taught any social skills at all,'' Smyth says. ''Most of them have been through several foster homes. It's just a mismatch there. We're the safety net.''

Indeed, by the time kids land at Maryville, they have likely failed a half a dozen foster homes, deepening their sense of distrust and cynicism and shattering their sense of self-worth. Maryville is usually the last chance to repair them.

Since 1979, Maryville has run an intensive therapy program based on the teacher-parent model pioneered at the modern-day Boys Town in Nebraska. Up to nine children live in a townhouse on 98-acre grounds in Des Plaines with a live-in adult or a married couple. Everything is a socialization experience. the kids make their own meals, shop for their groceries, clean house, wash the dishes and balance the house checkbook.

During the day, the parent notes all of their positive and negative behaviors and assigns points for each behavior. Shaking hands and establishing eye contact with a visitor earns points. Cleaning the dishes earns points. Asking for help, giving compliments, completing homework can all be worth points. Anti-social behaviors such as talking back or picking a fight bring negative points.

At 7 each evening, all the points are tallied on a 5-by-8-inch card. It is, in essence, a daily report card. Each child has to accumulate 10,000 points every day to earn privileges for the next day: snacks, television, Nintendo, the telephone.

Over time, the kids move up to higher levels. On the second level they get a later bedtime, more TV time and a point-card review every other day instead of daily. On the third level, privileges are more loosely negotiated. On the fourth, the kids achieve a considerable measure of independence.

Run away from Maryville and they're busted right down to the bottom.

In 1982 there were about 140,000 foster homes available to take in kids; in the most recent count by the National Foster Parent Association, there were just 100,000. So where are they putting all those kids?

''They're just putting more children in the homes,'' says Gordon Evans, spokesman for the association. ''There's an exodus of families. The kids' problems are much more severe than ever before, and (the foster parents) don't know how to cope.''

The foster care system, noble in intent, is a bureaucratic nightmare. Numerous studies have shown that many foster parents aren't adequately trained to handle the most troubled children. Moving children from foster home to foster home forces them to deal with rejection again and again. Health care for those children is so haphazard, as they bounce from home to home, that some states have resorted to issuing health-care ''passports'' so the latest doctor has some idea of the child's health history.

Some states have reacted to the problem by redoubling efforts to prevent child abuse—or responding to it with counseling and other services to parents and children in their homes. Those efforts are necessary, but the results of prevention efforts have been, at best, mixed.

While the child welfare system imploded, something else happened. Orphanages—the best of them, at least—evolved into highly sophisticated models for turning around the lives of the nation's most troubled kids through intensive, round-the-clock treatment.

Far from the barracks image of the old-style orphanages, the Maryville townhouse would be the envy of any college kid crammed into a dorm room. Each house has a roomy kitchen, a living room, a dining area and bedrooms—one for every two kids. The living room has comfortable sofas and lounge chairs, a 27-inch TV and a VCR. On the cork bulletin board, the therapy schedule shares space with the gym schedule.

''They provide consistency, motivation and professional care,'' says Patrick Murphy, the Cook County Public Guardian, whose father was a Maryville resident from 1914 to 1917. ''It's the only option for kids who can't handle the intimacy and demands and inconsistency of a foster home.''

Critics of institutional care argue that it can harm children by depriving them of a family structure. Says Marion Wright Edelman, director of the Children's Defense Fund, ''We went back to foster care because orphanages are not all Boys Towns. Most families are better than most institutions. That does not mean it's not possible to have humane institutions, but we believe in having a few adults and a few children relating to each other. I don't want to say there's never been a good orphanage, but it has to be at the very, very end of the continuum.''

Many of the kids at Maryville would agree. Give them a family that wanted them and they'd be gone in a moment. But many of those kids also acknowledge, perhaps reluctantly, that they can't cut it in a family right now. Says Tony Kohl, ''I want to go home after school and not think of myself as a Maryville kid. It'd be much different if I had a regular family, but I understand that's not going to happen.''

Maryville will never force a child to leave, no matter how difficult he is. But Tony has still had to deal with a different kind of rejection. In the spring, his parent-teacher took a new job somewhere else. The change to a new parent-teacher was hard on him, and his school grades dropped.

No one has the corner on perfection in child welfare. ''Any kid who can be in a foster home should be in a foster home. And if every kid can be in a foster home, close Maryville,'' Smyth declares. ''The question you have to ask is, what happens to the kids who are bounced out (of foster homes). If you're going to turn your back on those kids, they'll be on the street.

''When you take a kid who's bombed out from a foster care program, who is destructive, then you better have the wherewithal to hang in there and solve the problem. Now, that is tough duty.''

Besides psychological therapy, Maryville provides preparation for teenagers to live on their own. It tries to prepare them not only for independent living but for family life as adults. It has a Career Development Center with programs in carpentry, printing, auto repair and other vocations, each one sponsored by a local company.

While studies show nearly half the children who go through foster care drop out of school, every child who lives at Maryville graduates from high school. If a Maryville kid is accepted to college. Maryville pays the tuition, thanks largely to private donations. On average, one-third of each graduating class goes on to college, and two-thirds of those students earn a degree. Maryville has graduated kids from Notre Dame, Northwestern and other top schools.

All that comes at a hefty price; Maryville spends about $35,000 a year on each child. The parent-teacher, unlike a foster parent, is a paid professional. At Maryville they earn at least $34,000 a year, plus room and board. These costs are paid by the government and private donations.

Smyth's operation also recruits and trains foster parents and runs a parenting-teen center in Chicago, a witness protection program, a farm school and an emergency shelter for sexually abused children. Altogether, Maryville facilities assist more than 12,000 children each year.

Yes, Maryville works.

The aversion to orphanages nevertheless rages on. Gingrich's proposal to direct money saved from welfare to orphanages raised such an outcry that all references to orphanages were removed from the House bill.

But Gingrich had twisted the debate. Orphanages shouldn't be repositories for the children of poor parents who are forced off welfare; that's both mean-spirited and prohibitively expensive. But more orphanages are needed right now for children who are victims of serious physical or sexual abuse.

The genesis of the move to revive orphanages is generally traced to Lois Forer, a retired judge in Philadelphia who spent years in family court and saw no end to the foster-care treadmill on which many children were running. Joyce Ladner, the acting president of Howard University and a child welfare expert, echoed Forer's opinion that more orphanages are critically needed.

Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan sounded the alarm in 1989, writing that the prevalence of crack-cocaine will ''soon give us the no-parent child as a social problem.'' The likely answer, he said, was the re-establishment of orphanages. Much in the way that Moynihan's prescience about the underclass was ignored in the 1960s, his warnings about the state of children have been ignored today.

In 1991, Illinois became the first state to launch a formal investigation into reviving orphanages. But a state-established task force concluded that orphanages are ''not consistent'' with the goal of rapidly returning abused children to their families. The task force seemed not to notice that in the 18 months it spent preparing its report, Illinois' foster-care rolls had swelled by another 11,000 children.

The opponents of orphanages make several critical errors. They raise fears that orphanages will be used inappropriately in place of foster homes, but they don't recognize that foster care is being destroyed by a system that forces troubled kids into it who don't belong there, don't benefit from it, and whose behavior hounds foster parents into quitting.

The opponents cling to the hope that better foster care and ''family preservation'' programs can handle the child-welfare crisis. It's true that prevention programs are critical and show real promise, but they are still in their infancy. And they're being swamped by the child-abuse epidemic.

Just as flu and typhoid created scores of orphans in the 1890s, so have crack-cocaine and AIDS in the 1990s. ''We're always going to have dysfunctional families. But I'm convinced that sexual abuse and physical abuse is the result of being high on crack-cocaine and alcohol,'' says Smyth. ''They're nuts, they're crazy: When they walk in a room, a 7-year-old girl looks like a 21-year-old girl. Human nature has not changed that much in 10, 12, 15 years.''

In the 1990s, child abuse often starts in the womb. At the child intake center run by Maryville, roughly 5 to 10 infants arrive each day suffering from fetal alcohol syndrome or the symptoms of crack-cocaine use by their mothers.

The nation can't handle its drug epidemic, which begat the child welfare epidemic. It can't prevent drugs from being manufactured here or shipped in from somewhere else. It doesn't have enough jail cells to lock up the users. And it does not want to spend the money for treatment.

On top of that, the nation is just beginning to deal with the disaster of a federal welfare policy that prevents outright destitution but contributes to a permanent underclass, which is most prone to child neglect.

''Everything it has done has destroyed families,'' says Smith, who works closely with welfare recipients. ''These are the conditions of welfare. You cannot own anything. You cannot save anything, you cannot work and you can't get married. I think that's slavery. If you took away welfare, they'd work. And they'd live and they'd succeed. But you have to raise people up so they can compete. You start by making sure the family stays together and the kids stay in school.''

Until the nation figures out how to raise up the underclass and end drug abuse—utopian notions, perhaps—it has to figure out what to do with all the kids who can't live safely at home, particularly those whose emotional scars run deepest.

It cannot afford to turn its back on any reasonable solutions. And that includes the 1990s version of the orphanage.

THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

HON. ANDREW JACOBS, JR.

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 7, 1995

Mr. JACOBS. Mr. Speaker, despite her splendid accomplishments as Social Security Commissioner which are set out in the following USA Today article, Shirley Chater's nomination to become the first head of the non-partisan independent Social Security Administration has been held up in the Senate Finance Committee, thus proving that there is more than one way to abuse a women.

[From the USA Today, Aug. 30, 1995]

AGENCY PUTS FOCUS ON ITS CUSTOMERS

(By Martha T. Moore)

WASHINGTON.—For knowledgeable, helpful, polite telephone service, a shopper can call that famous mail-order retailer in Maine.

Or, a taxpayer can call Social Security.

After two years of corporate-style reengineering, the Social Security Administration is emerging as the federal agency that's providing the best service to its customers—that is, to taxpayers. It's a favorite of Vice President Gore, the champion of reinventing government, and Michael Hammer, co-author of Reengineeing the Corporation—the book that spurred the reengineering movement.

And in key measures of customers satisfaction, Social Security has outscored companies famed for service, such as Nordstrom and L.L. Bean. That's an ''incredible'' achievement, Gore says. ''They're really transforming and reengineering their agency.''

Reengineering, a term borrowed from the corporate world, means a start-from-scratch overhaul of the way an organization does its work, with goals determined by customers' desires and performance measured by comparisons against the best in the industry. Since 1993, when the Clinton administration kicked off its National Performance Review for government agencies, Social Security has pressed hard to improve customer service, through the agency's toll-free number (800–772–1213) for questions and information, and in its field offices. The changes that have been made are both obvious and subtle. For one thing, taxpayers are now referred to as customers.

As well they should be, says Stephanie Martin, a telephone representative at the agency's Jamaica (N.Y.) Tele-service Center. ''Social Security is a business of insurance,'' says Martin, who handles 50 to 70 callers a day. ''They are paying to be insured.''

The results so far: In a survey of telephone customer service in May, Social Security outperformed private companies famous for their customer service, including catalog retailer L.L. Bean and Baldrige Quality Award winners Federal Express and AT&T Universal Card.

''There are some government departments which are effectively resisting this whole (performance review) thing tooth and nail, which are bureaucratic nightmares beyond anything one could imagine,'' Hammer says. ''A few agencies are doing a good job. The Social Security Administration is one of the leaders.''

Social Security Commissioner Shirley Chater is hoping for a fringe benefit from reengineering: If people believe Social Security is run efficiently, they may worry less about whether it will go broke before they retire. ''Good service equals confidence in the program,'' she says.

To come up with a revamped process, the agency began the way corporations do: It created a reengineering team. Together with consultants, the team members visited private companies such as AT&T's Universal Card operation to see how they operate. And they did what all market researchers do: they talked to the people who use their services. ''The cornerstone is to find out what your customers want,'' says Toni Lenane, chief policy officer and head of the customer service program. The agency surveyed 10,000 people, conducted focus groups, and mailed 22,000 comment cards to people who had visited Social Security offices.

What the team learned: Customers don't expect the world, but they want to be treated well and quickly. Based on the results, the agency pledged to treat customers politely and promptly. It instituted more courtesy training for employees. It is reassigning as many as 700 staff members from headquarters and support jobs to field offices to deal with customers face-to-face.

The biggest effort focuses on the 800 number, most taxpayers' first contact with the agency. Social Security's goal is for customers to reach a representative within five minutes.

It's a tough task. Because all Social Security checks normally arrive on the third day of the month (unless that falls on a Sunday), everyone who has a problem calls on the same day to complain. That's why the agency hasn't met its five-minute target yet. In the May telephone service survey, Social Security scored first in every aspect of telephone service except time spent on hold: Its callers held for about eight minutes on average. Agency figures for week of August 7–11 show that 69% of callers got through within five minutes. Lenane admits that on the worst days, callers may never get through. So the reengineering isn't over. By January, the agency predicts the success rate will reach 95%. To hit that goal, it is adding staff to answer phones at peak times. In January, when calls typically increase because of December retirees and frequent questions about cost-of-living adjustments and taxes, the agency will boost the number of people answering phones from 4,600 last year, then a record, to 7,900. Most help comes from other agency workers trained to pitch in temporarily.

Upgrading phone systems and adding automated information to answer the most common questions. Already, a menu allows callers to choose English or Spanish language help. That's a boon for Betsy Reyes, a bilingual representative at the Queens (N.Y.) phone center. Before, she was summoned each time an agency worker received a call from a Spanish speaker. Now those calls queue up automatically.

Staggering delivery times of checks for people who retire in coming years. The agency had hoped to stagger checks for people already receiving Social Security as well. But current recipients, whose finances revolve around a check arriving the third of each month, were opposed.

While the reinvention of customer service continues, the agency also is preparing to tackle and even tougher challenge: fixing the process for awarding disability benefits. Now, it's a nightmare that can drag on for nearly two years—even though the actual labor involved in a disability claim, by the agency's own count, totals 45 hours. Even a simple claim for benefits that doesn't get appealed takes 155 days—five months—to be decided. The problem: a cumbersome administrative process. Handling the disability program, though it involves only 20% of Social Security recipients, takes up more than half of the agency's $4.9 billion administrative budget.

The goal for reengineering that process calls for a disability application to be handled by one person, down from 13 currently. A four-level process will be cut to two levels. ''You can always continue to throw money at something, but we really needed to fundamentally rethink the program,'' says Charles Jones, director of the disability process redesign.

The reengineering, which will take five years to complete, hinges on a new computer